

of the Councils. If similar power be vested in the members of the Municipal Councils here also, the Presidents would be more alive to their responsibility.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Tanumalayaperumal Pillai, your general representation will be considered along with the draft of the new Municipal Bill which is under preparation.

There are two or three special representations about *poramboke* lands, drinking water for Vadivisvaram and congestion in fishermen's quarters at Kottar. These will be enquired into.

The Assembly adjourned for lunch at 2-5 P. M. and reassembled at 3 P. M.

65. Needs of the Trivandrum Municipal Council.

Mr. N. S. SUBRAHMANYA AIYAR (*Municipal Council, Trivandrum*) said that one of the important problems that demanded the immediate attention of the Government was the question of providing a decent building for the local Municipal Council Office. The building in which the office was located was in a very deplorable condition. The Council had made repeated requests to the Government for the grant of a decent sum, part as loan and part as a contribution, for the purpose of providing a decent building for housing the office. If the Dewan were to inspect the existing building, he would surely not allow the Council to hold its meetings there. The building was so unsafe.

The Municipal Council, Trivandrum, was not able to maintain a balanced budget, as the demands of the town which it had to attend to were increasing from day to day. The nominal reserve fund of the Council had also been exhausted and the Council had to depend solely upon its recurring income for its expenditure. The income was practically constant, while the expenditure was increasing gradually. More than a third of the town was occupied by Government buildings, which were exempt from taxation. To compensate for the loss to the Council under house tax on this account, the Government fixed a grant of Rs. 20,000 per annum to the Municipality many years back. The revenue of the Council under house tax had increased on account of re-assessment and the revision of the annual rental, but the Government grant had been reduced. The undisbursed portion of the grant for 1107 had been withheld for reasons known only to the Government. The recent outbreak of epidemics in the town as well as the prevailing economic depression had greatly affected the slender resources of the Municipality. Early orders should therefore be issued for the immediate payment of the undisbursed portion of the grant for 1107. The Government should also sympathetically consider requisitions for grants from the Municipal Council.

The member next requested that the new City Municipal Bill for the Trivandrum Municipality should be expedited. The existing Regulation was far behind the times unsuitable to the growing needs of

Municipal administration. The new Bill should be introduced in the Legislative Council and passed into law at an early date.

The Municipal Council should be given wider powers for controlling theatrical and other performances within municipal limits. Under the existing Regulation, a license has to be obtained from the Municipal Council for conducting any performance within the municipal limits. But the only remedy open to the Council, in case of default, was to prosecute the defaulter, but it could not stop the performance. Though the Council had certain rights in the matter it had not the authority to enforce them. This defect should be remedied.

The Trivandrum Municipal Council should be given the power to elect a non-official President. In the initial stages of Municipal administration, the Government had a justification in insisting on an official President. But it was not desirable that the practice should be continued for all time to come, especially in view of the fact that all the other Municipal Councils in the State had the power to elect non-official Presidents. The official President, by his peculiar position, could be of no help either to the Council or to the Government in matters where the Council and the Government were at variance.

Another amendment required to the existing Regulation was the removal of sex disqualification in the case of women for membership on the Council. The State was highly advanced in the matter of female education. Women were eligible to be members of the Legislative Council and of the Assembly. The Regulation should be amended so as to make women eligible to be Municipal Councillors also.

The question of the right of Municipal Councils over *poramboke* lands within municipal limits had been a matter of controversy between the Council and the Revenue authorities. The registry of a *poramboke* land within municipal limits was being effected by the Revenue Department after reference to the Municipal Council, and sometimes the reference was not made before registry and even in cases where they were consulted in advance, the opinion of the Council did not prevail. *Porambokes* could with advantage be vested in the Municipal Councils, which alone were in the best position to know about their utility. The member hoped that this defect also would be remedied by the new Regulation.

The member lastly urged the need for giving due representation to the Municipalities in the Legislative Council. This would enable the members representing the Municipalities to bring the changes required in the provisions of the Regulation, found necessary in their actual working, direct to the Legislative Council. The members of the Municipal Councils would be better conversant with the actual working of these institutions than the Government member.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Subrahmanya Aiyar, the question of granting a loan for constructing a municipal building will be considered again.

MEMBER: A personal visit of Your Excellency to the place where the Municipal Council is being held will convince you of the need for a building, and I am sure that, if only you make a visit, you will not consider it safe for us to hold our meetings there.

DEWAN: Will it be safe for me to do that? I cannot promise an immediate visit.

MEMBER: You may do it conveniently.

DEWAN: You ask for disbursing the grant this year. Subject to a reduction, for which there is special reason, it will be disbursed in the usual course.

All that you say in connection with the new Bill is noted. As soon as the draft Bill is examined, it will be submitted for legislative sanction.

66. Certain needs of municipalities.

MR. K. G. MAMMAN (*Municipal Council, Kayankulam*) represented the need for transferring all *poramboke* lands, including road *porambokes*, within municipal limits, to the respective Municipal Councils. The *porambokes* were under the control of either the Revenue or the Public Works Department. But the Municipalities had to deal with these lands and the absence of control over these lands led to many inconveniences. The member cited some instances and said that at the All-Travancore Municipal Conference held at Nagercoil in 1105, it was resolved that the Government be requested to transfer the control over the *poramboke* lands within municipal limits to the Municipal Councils. He requested that the Government should bestow their early attention on the matter and do the needful.

Another point urged on the attention of the Government was about the necessity of appointing a separate auditor for the Municipalities in the State. The existing system of auditing the accounts was not satisfactory. In British India, the Taluk Boards had a separate auditor. The same system could be adopted here also with advantage.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Mamman, all these matters will be considered in drafting the new Municipal Bill.

67. Grant of permission to the Haripad Municipal Council to levy tolls.

MR. A. C. RAJA RAJA VARAMA KOILTAMPURAN (*Municipal Council, Haripad*) said that the financial condition of the Haripad Municipality was quite poor. The total income of the Municipality came to only a little over Rs. 2,500 a year, including the Government grant of Rs. 500. The major portion of the revenue was collected under house-tax. The Municipality had not sufficient funds even for its immediate necessities, not to speak of the various improvements it had to effect for the welfare of the people. The citizens of Haripad had been agitating for the abolition of the Municipality owing to the heavy burden of taxation imposed by the Municipal Council. There was, however, one method by which the finances of the